

had absolutely no precedent, that conditions in the South are very different from those in the North and West, and that what may seem very inadequate from a professional standpoint to nurses in other sections of the country really represents a great deal when we consider all of the circumstances in connection with the passage of the bill. The statute provides for registration with the County Clerk, with the keeping of a roll of registered nurses, and for the revocation of a license or certificate for adequate causes and by a method of procedure clearly defined.

While the North Carolina bill is not one to be taken as a standard, still as we review the obstacles that nurses of the successful states have had to overcome, and the number of failures that have been met with in other directions, this bill as it stands, the first to become a law, impresses us as an achievement to be proud of. Time will remedy its defects.

A WEAK POINT

For many years there has been more or less complaint and criticism from the oculists regarding the provisions made by general hospitals and nurses' schools for the care of the eye patient.

If one takes the time to inquire and observe, one will find that the complaint is not only well founded, but that the oculists have been remarkably patient and long-suffering. The improvements in the hospitals have been made principally for general surgery, laboratory work, and later dietetics. In some instances the eye patient has had a post-script added for his benefit by making use of some nook or corner which was originally intended for some other purpose, but more often he is nearly overlooked altogether. Teaching of the nurses has been likewise pushed aside for what seemed more important subjects, which leaves graduates of many general hospitals woefully ignorant of the care of the eyes, outside of the preventive measures used with the new-born child.

That this has been done unconsciously there is no doubt, but it seems time for all concerned, hospital officials as well as nursing teachers, to stop and consider.

Sooner or later the great bulk of humanity needs the service of the oculist. Few of us escape, and a glimpse of any public school, with its vast numbers of small children wearing glasses, will convince any doubter of the need of a better understanding of the eye, its use and abuse, both in health and disease.

We make a plea to nurses' teachers to improve this point in their

curricula, to hospital managers to make better provision for the treatment and nursing; and to graduates who are seeking interesting topics for their alumnae associations to work upon, we would say that here is a subject timely, much neglected, and of vast importance.

SOME OF THE REASONS

It is not only in the army and in our regular hospitals that there seems to be a scarcity of good nurses, but in the broader fields that are opening up we frequently hear of great difficulties which boards in different lines are having to secure the right kind of women for special kinds of nursing work. The tuberculosis crusade has taken a great many into that field, while district nursing calls for the very highest type of women, although even in that direction we hear the cry that it is impossible to get enough. Boards of Health in a number of cities that we have known about have started out with the very commendable ruling that only graduates of the highest grade of schools, or women who are registered where such laws are in force, shall be eligible for positions in the tuberculosis or contagious hospitals. It has been our humiliating experience to see these standards broken down in a number of instances, simply because the women of the higher type have refused to take these positions, and inexperienced nurses have been placed in important positions simply because no others were available.

The salary offered for these positions is usually only fifty dollars. We think institutions will have to make up their minds to pay higher salaries to women of experience, and we see no reason why they should not, particularly in a contagious hospital. We understand that the insane hospitals are having their own difficulties in securing able women for the permanent positions, and we here again think that state and city institutions will have to increase the salary allowance in order to meet the situation. In every line of work requiring skilled labor there is a scarcity of competent men and women all over the country. It is in the trades, in every line of business, among teachers of every class, and, as we know, in all kinds of public institutions. The cost of living has increased very materially, the ordinary food supplies, clothing, and rent having advanced steadily in the past few years, and yet the salaries to teachers and nurses in permanent positions have not advanced. We believe this is one reason why the institutions of every kind are having such difficulty in filling their permanent positions.

The great library development of the country, with the establishment of library schools, is comparatively recent, and has taken great